

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/29/2010 5:53 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Achievement Network LTD -- , - , (U396C100771)

Reader #1:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 25 Points)	25	22
2. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 25 Points)	25	25
3. E. Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale (up to 5 Points)	5	4
4. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	9
5. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	6
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	0

Technical Review Form

Development 27: 84.396C

Reader #1:

Applicant: The Achievement Network LTD -- , - , (U396C100771)

Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement

The project has merit. Strengths of the proposal include: clearly stated goals, quasi-experimental design, clear need for the project, and highly qualified organization. Concerns focused on the need for a tighter connection between the timeline, budget narrative, and budget.

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 25 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project clearly specified and measurable and linked to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet.

Strengths

There will be 25,200 students in 120 schools affecting 1,000 teachers. They are all from large urban districts. The proposal also identified clear needs for the interventions within large urban districts.

There are clearly stated goals, for example: average one year's increase in language arts and math.

The proposal contained a strong plan for treatment and control groups - with a staggered start implementation plan. This allows for baseline and control group comparisons but provides the treatment to all students.

Weaknesses

The analysis of new schools is absent. There was a need for data on these schools. The selection process was not clear.

Reader's Score: 22

2. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 25 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing projects of the size and scope proposed by the eligible applicant.**
- (2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that -**
 - (a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -**
 - (i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and**
 - (ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or**
 - (b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.**

Strengths

ANET provided strong evidence and independent reports of their ability to improve student achievement. The many letters and quotes (Appendix) acknowledging the positive impact ANET has had were impressive. Empirical data were also provided.

Weaknesses

None noted.

Reader's Score: 25

3. E. Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale (up to 5 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to further develop and bring to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project, and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to further develop and bring to scale the proposed practice, strategy, or program, or to work with others (including other partners) to ensure that the proposed practice, strategy, or program can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 250,000, and 500,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths

The numbers of students impacted (25,000 students and 120 schools) is

impressive.

The resumes indicated excellent capacity for effectively managing a project of this scope and sequence.

Replication of the project would require strong fiscal commitments by a district but it could be replicated.

The dissemination plan was acceptable.

Weaknesses

The start-up costs are not calculated into the scale-up costs, this inaccurately projects the costs at \$154.

Reader's Score: 4

4. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources, as well as the support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) to operate the project beyond the length of the Development grant.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Development grant.

Strengths

The proposal explained specific plans for sustainability (encouraging the private sector support).

The school district is investing in the project.
There were strong letters of support from the partners.

Since these are new schools in existing districts they are building on continuous successes and improvements.

The proposal will allow for sharing of project methods and outcomes through the web portal

Weaknesses

The costs need to reflect how the districts will sustain the project.

Reader's Score: 9

5. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.

Strengths

There was strong evidence that this organization could effectively manage the project. The personnel are highly qualified.

Weaknesses

It would have been useful to have seen the timeline aligned to project goals. There were no specifics in terms of the numbers of personnel required for the project.

The budget narrative was vague; explanations should always be tied to dollar amounts.

The budget narrative was vague; explanations should always be tied to dollar amounts.

It was not clear on what the "Other" category of \$800,000 included. It was also unclear what additional programs and services those dollars were to be expended upon.

The "project manager's" role was also vague.

Reader's Score: 6

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Weaknesses

The proposal did not identify any Competitive Preference Priorities, thus no points were given.

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

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Last Updated: 06/29/2010 5:53 PM

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/28/2010 4:20 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Achievement Network LTD -- , - , (U396C100771)

Reader #2:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 25 Points)	25	22
2. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 25 Points)	25	25
3. E. Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale (up to 5 Points)	5	3
4. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	8
5. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	7
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	0

Technical Review Form

Development 27: 84.396C

Reader #2:

Applicant: The Achievement Network LTD -- , - , (U396C100771)

Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement

The applicant is focusing on developing a program that makes wider and more effective uses of school performance data bases. Support would enable the project to expand to serve an additional 120 schools and more than 25,000 students. Originating in Boston, the project would work with schools in tow additional states and in DC. The project would facilitate a closer alignment of standards, curricula offerings, assessment and teaching practices.

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 25 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project clearly specified and measurable and linked to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet.

Strengths

This project addresses the challenge of having a persistent achievement gap. The applicant's plan involves a well-documented comprehensive approach that expands on the current program. Some 120 schools, grades 3-8, would be involved in the study. Data coaches would be deployed to assist teachers to make wider and more effective use of school achievement data.

Weaknesses

The analysis of needs and the actual condition and progress of schools and new districts that will be involved is less than adequate. The applicant merely cites the fact that they have similar profiles to those in the current batch of schools. It is less than certain that the (120) have been identified and the composition of schools surveyed or analyzed. There is an indication that to date the applicant is more experienced in working with charter schools.

Reader's Score: 22

2. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 25 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing projects of the size and scope proposed by the eligible applicant.**
- (2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that -**
 - (a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -**
 - (i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and**
 - (ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or**
 - (b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.**

Strengths

The applicant appears to have substantial experience and the application

demonstrates an understanding for the need to implement a comprehensive program of intervention. The project builds on current programs that are operating in several different locations and evidence of progress is documented. Impact seems a likely outcome.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 25

3. E. Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale (up to 5 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to further develop and bring to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project, and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to further develop and bring to scale the proposed practice, strategy, or program, or to work with others (including other partners) to ensure that the proposed practice, strategy, or program can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 250,000, and 500,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths

The applicant's proposal builds on current and successful programs that are

operating in several school districts. The team to carry on seems to be in place.

Weaknesses

Cost considerations could have been given more attention. Cost data particularly the actual start up needed to be detailed. The dissemination plan seems less developed and strategic than might be expected given the applicant's experience.

Reader's Score: 3

4. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources, as well as the support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) to operate the project beyond the length of the Development grant.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Development grant.

Strengths

Because the project director and support team are basically building and expanding on currently successful program innovations, they appear to be in position to develop and market the program further, and in reducing start-up costs. An effective and supportive program in place provides a strong start up.

Weaknesses

Cost considerations are a growing factor as states are required to cut costs for K-12 programs. The applicant may be too optimistic in saying that schools will be able to build their capacity without having ongoing technical assistance and support from outside. There are no guarantees that membership fees will continue to be available.

Reader's Score: 8

5. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.

Strengths

The management team and support personnel are well prepared to assume successful management of this innovative school intervention program. The staff appear to have strong academic credentials and have the ability to draw on faculty and students to support the technical services and evaluation component of the project.

Weaknesses

Project and evaluation managers need to be hired. It would be terribly important to get the full project support team on as soon as possible, and this may represent a challenge. Unable to determine the commitment from M. West

Reader's Score: 7

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);**
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and**
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in**

kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Competitiveness priority not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Competitiveness priority not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Competitiveness priority not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Competitiveness priority not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/28/2010 4:20 PM

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/25/2010 11:55 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Achievement Network LTD -- , - , (U396C100771)

Reader #3:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 25 Points)	25	22
2. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 25 Points)	25	25
3. E. Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale (up to 5 Points)	5	5
4. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	10
5. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	8
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	0

Technical Review Form

Development 27: 84.396C

Reader #3:

Applicant: The Achievement Network LTD -- , - , (U396C100771)

Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement

Anet schools are looking to increase achievement, in grades 3-8, with the possibility of reaching 120 low-income schools and 25,000 students.

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 25 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project clearly specified and measurable and linked to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet.

Strengths

There is historical data to show that a margin of proficiency has occurred from the use of this program. Anet schools increase achievement by

increasing academic scores in grades 3-8. It has the possibility of reaching 120 low-income schools and 25,000 students. Data driven assessment can support instruction, professional development and management practices. A very specific glimpse is given visually of how Anet actually works in day to day operation. Anet is a system that supports the data available. Each objective is explained in detail including assessment, training, and networking. Strategy and partnerships are detailed in the progress of this grant, as the program has been in place in other MA schools.

Weaknesses

On page 12 the data is marginal, because it does not show significant achievement for the gaps being reached. Roles for personnel and management were not specific. Details of schools being targeted were not mentioned.

Reader's Score: 22

2. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 25 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing projects of the size and scope proposed by the eligible applicant.**
- (2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that -**
 - (a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -**
 - (i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and**
 - (ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or**
 - (b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.**

Strengths

Anet has a reputation for getting results, by demonstrating three years of data at 27% growth. It has expanded the number of schools in a rate of 172% which cannot be ignored. With private funding and 155% increase in students being served the historical growth cannot be ignored. There is also evidence of private and non-private schools utilizing this strategy. Criteria are already established and built into the program which adds to the consistency of the growth of this program. Gains are mentioned from a few BPS schools in comparison to the DCPS district. One campus received recognition for their achievements. Expertise is demonstrated as this program has been done before with information on page 15 and page 16 that this program is effective.

Weaknesses

None noted.

Reader's Score: 25

3. E. Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale (up to 5 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to further develop and bring to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project, and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.**
- (2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to further develop and bring to scale the proposed practice, strategy, or program, or to work with others (including other partners) to ensure that the proposed practice, strategy, or program can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.**
- (3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.**
- (4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 250,000, and**

500,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths

There is a staff already in place and partnership to recruit from. Teach from America is used to recruit coaches. A new project manager and evaluation manager for the new schools is proposed with only start-up costs and initial funding for staff being utilized from this grant funding. Membership fees are used to counteract the other needed funding for bringing this to scale. Strategies are consistent, because it already has other schools in place- this is a big strength. There is value to having evidence of user satisfaction with 100 % membership remaining with Anet each year. Dissemination is established with many facets.

Weaknesses

None noted.

Reader's Score: 5

4. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources, as well as the support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) to operate the project beyond the length of the Development grant.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Development grant.

Strengths

There is strength knowing that the costs will decline during the program. The mix of decreasing costs and the use of replacing subsidiaries will help Anet to be self-sufficient. It is noted again that private sector partnerships will help to support this program and are specifically mentioned with a letter of support. Membership fees paid by the schools will replace grant subsidiaries. The planning of this program is solid and respectively thought out. Commitment from schools does not appear to be an issue, including availability to work with the superintendents. A cash reserve is

noted to keep this project going.

Weaknesses

None noted.

Reader's Score: 10

5. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.

Strengths

Many key personnel are already in place with exception to the hiring of the project manager and evaluation manager. Criteria and experience needed for these two positions matches the need of this program. There has been no history of personnel leaving the program and Anet even reports the consistency of the personnel upon return.

Weaknesses

Although there is shown expertise for these personnel some roles are not explicit and need more clarification.

Reader's Score: 8

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through

3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

Preference not addressed.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Preference not addressed.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Preference not addressed.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Preference not addressed.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/25/2010 11:55 PM

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/21/2010 6:57 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Achievement Network LTD -- , - , (U396D100771)

Reader #1:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Evaluation Criteria		
1. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 10 Points)	10	9
2. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	13
<i>SUB TOTAL</i>	25	22
TOTAL	25	22

Technical Review Form

Development Tier 2 Panel 09: 84.396D

Reader #1:

Applicant: The Achievement Network LTD -- , - , (U396D100771)

1. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 10 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including reported practice, theoretical considerations, and the significance and magnitude of any effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout

rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there are research-based findings or reasonable hypotheses that support the proposed project, including related research in education and other sectors.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has been attempted previously, albeit on a limited scale or in a limited setting, with promising results that suggest that more formal and systematic study is warranted.

(3) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that, if funded, the proposed project likely will have a positive impact, as measured by the importance or magnitude of the effect, on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

Strengths

The ANet model is used in ~100 schools nationwide, with more growth planned for each coming year independent of i3 funds. The model clearly meets the requirement of having been attempted previously.

Previous research on formative assessment in general indicates strong impacts (.4 to .7 sd)?clearly, there is a reasonable hypothesis that ANet's program would produce positive results.

ANet's model appears to be based on previous research about the components of high-quality and effective interim/formative assessment programs (p. e9), indicating that the intervention is theoretically grounded in the research literature.

The RFA study of interim assessment practices found small to moderate effect sizes of .1 to .2 for components of the ANet model and their impact on student learning gains, modest but consistently positive impacts. (p. e11)

Weaknesses

The matched study by Bain and Co. about the effectiveness of ANet showed small effects, just 2-3% more students proficient or advanced on the MCAS. (p. e10) Gains were somewhat larger for public only schools (4%-9%, p.

e15) The study did not appear to include random assignment, which makes it difficult to evaluate the validity of those findings. (p. e10)

Reader's Score: 9

2. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors.

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are appropriate to the size and scope of the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project to facilitate further development, replication, or testing in other settings.

(4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Strengths

There are randomly assigned treatment and control groups, which will allow for an unbiased impact estimate.

There are 60 schools per group, which should provide more than enough power to detect effects (rule of thumb is 30-40 schools).

Other outcome variables than just student achievement are being measured, including teacher behavior, school leader behavior, and school culture (p. e16), allowing for the examination of pathways through which ANet does or does not lead to achievement gains.

Implementation will be measured using ANet's implementation rubric for the treatment group, and there are plans to investigate the relationship between implementation and outcomes. Quantitative and qualitative methods will be used to evaluate implementation, which will help the research team understand the effective components of the program and enhance the ability to scale-up or refine moving forward.

The testing of the intervention in multiple districts will enhance the external validity of the research.

Weaknesses

There is little detail provided about the site visits, such as what kinds of data will be collected on the visits and how those data will be analyzed.

Reader's Score: 13

Status: Submitted**Last Updated:** 07/21/2010 6:57 PM

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/22/2010 7:20 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Achievement Network LTD -- , - , (U396D100771)

Reader #2:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Evaluation Criteria		
1. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 10 Points)	10	9
2. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	15
<i>SUB TOTAL</i>	25	24
TOTAL	25	24

Technical Review Form

Development Tier 2 Panel 09: 84.396D

Reader #2:

Applicant: The Achievement Network LTD -- , - , (U396D100771)

1. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 10 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including reported practice, theoretical considerations, and the significance and magnitude of any effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout

rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there are research-based findings or reasonable hypotheses that support the proposed project, including related research in education and other sectors.
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project has been attempted previously, albeit on a limited scale or in a limited setting, with promising results that suggest that more formal and systematic study is warranted.
- (3) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that, if funded, the proposed project likely will have a positive impact, as measured by the importance or magnitude of the effect, on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

Strengths

The proposers cite previous research indicating that the use of interim assessments produces substantial gains and effect sizes for student achievement. They provide a careful analysis of the literature related to the nature of the assessments and the conditions mediating improved performance.

ANet has been previously implemented over a 5-year period and the proposers report that in a matched comparison group study the ANeT schools produced significantly more students scoring at proficient and advanced levels on state test.

Some ANet schools have achieved impressive gains (e.g., Roosevelt School was able to move out of restructuring status and increased the percentage of students scoring advanced or proficient by 19% and 34% in RL in a single year).

Weaknesses

The overall gains of 3% and 2% for the number of students scoring in the proficient and advanced categories, while statistically significant, do not seem substantial given the numbers of students scoring below those levels.

Reader's Score: 9

2. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors.

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are appropriate to the size and scope of the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project to facilitate further development, replication, or testing in other settings.

(4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Strengths

The proposers have contracted with CEPR at Harvard to plan and conduct the evaluation of the intervention. They report that the "excess demand for ANeT services will allow a school level random assignment design of 120 schools." 60 of the schools will receive services for 2 years before the 60 control schools. This will allow the researchers to draw strong causal conclusions.

The proposers have included the collection of implementation data that includes teacher surveys, principal/school leaders surveys, and ANeT implementation reports. These data are sufficient to provide performance feedback and fidelity of implementation data. They will also have sufficient data for further development and replication efforts.

The use of the existing network is an important strength of this project. The project has been implemented for approximately 5 years in each of the network sites. This means that strong implementation teams are in place and the likelihood of having an impact in the short time period of the grant is greatly enhanced.

The proposers have devoted 37% of USDOE funds to the implementation of the randomized trial and sharing best practices.

Weaknesses

none

Reader's Score: 15

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/22/2010 7:20 PM